

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 199405

62

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DRAFTED BY: EUR/WE: M.J. HABIB

APPROVED BY: EUR/WE: RDVINE

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R 060025Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 199405

STADIS//////////

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT PORT LOUIS 965 SENT ACTION SECSTATE OCT. 2:

QUOTE

C O N F I E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0965

STADIS

LIMDIS

AF/C FOR COHEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH REQUEST FOR REST CAMP IN MAURITIUS

REF: A) A-165, 7/10/73

B) PORT LOUIS 0826 8/23/73

C) A-200, 9/18/73

1. POST HAS REPORTED (REFS) VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MIGHT TEND  
ERODE U.K. POSITION IN MAURITUS ON SECURITY/DEFENSE ISSUES. LOCAL  
OFFICIAL BRITISH REACTION TO FRENCH OFFER TO GOM OF HELICOPTER,  
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PAGE 02 STATE 199405

ASSIGNMENT OF INDIAN OFFICERS TO SPECIAL MOBILE FORCE, ETC., HAS

BEEN ONE OF RESIGNATION, IF NOT PHLEGM. NEW DEVELOPMENT HAS HOW-  
EVER NOW OCCURRED, ACCORDING TO U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER CARTER,  
WHICH GIVES HIM CONSIDERABLE CONCERN.

2. CARTER SAID IN STRICT CONFIDENCE THAT FRENCH HAVE ASKED  
MAURITIANS IF A HINT FROM FRENCH ARMY FORCES IN REUNION MAY  
UTILIZE AREA NEAR MAHEBORG FOR REST CAMP ON ROTATIONAL BASIS.  
CARTER, EQUATING WORD UNIT WITH BRITISH BATTALION STRENGTH  
CONCLUDES THIS COULD MEAN 450 FRENCH TROOPS MIGHT BE ON THE ISLAND  
AT ANY GIVEN TIME.

3. LOCATION OF PROPOSED REST CAMP SIGNIFICANT IN THAT MAHEBOURG IS  
IN GRAND PORT AREA AND U.K. HICOMM FEARS THAT SUCH LOCATION MIGHT  
STIR UP WHOLE PORT DEVELOPMENT QUESTION THAT HE THOUGHT HAD BEEN  
QUASHED SEVERAL YEARS AGO. ALSO MAHEBOURG DIRECTLY ADJOINS  
PLAISANCE AIRFIELD (AND ITS U.S.- BUILT PARKING APRON - STATE 193625)  
WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE PHASED OUT CIRCA 1976 WHEN CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT  
COMMENCE USE NEW AIRPORT IN NORTH TO BE CONSTRUCTED.

4. THIS REST CAMP REQUEST IS APPARENTLY ONE THAT WAS COOKED UP  
BETWEEN FONMIN DUVAL AND FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COOPERATION  
DENIAU DURING LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO MAURITIUS. UNCERTAIN AT THIS  
STAGE WHETHER QUAI D'ORSAY HAS GIVEN ITS ACCORD TO REQUEST OR  
WHETHER REQUEST IS EVEN ATTUNED TO OVERALL FRENCH VIEWS ON INDIAN  
OCEAN (PARIS 24597, 9/19/73).

5. REQUEST IS NOW IN HANDS OF PRIME MINISTER WHO PRIVATELY INFORMED  
CARTER OF IT. PRIMIN OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED BECAUSE OF TERRIFIC  
POLITICAL LEVERAGE PRESENCE OF FRENCH TROOPS COULD GIVE DUVAL.  
HE EQUALLY OBVIOUSLY AWARE OF IMPACT SUCH STEP WOULD HAVE WITHIN  
HIS OWN PARTY AND VIS-A-VIS OAU PARTNERS, INDIA, ETC. CONSEQUENTLY,  
HE APPARENTLY HOPING U.K. CAN COME UP WITH SOME RATIONALE TO ALLOW  
HIM REJECT REQUEST. CARTER SAYS THAT ACCORDING HIS OWN INTER-  
PRETATION U.K./GOM DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS, ITS PROVISIONS WOULD NOT  
RPT NOT PRECLUDE SUCH REST CAMP. HOWEVER, HE HAS BEEN IN CONTACT  
WITH LONDON AUTHORITIES WHO HAVE PRESUMABLY DISCUSSED ISSUE WITH  
DR. RAM DURING HIS PRESENT SHORT STAY IN U.K.

6. UNLIKELY THIS MATTER WILL AT ALL SURFACE DURING PRIME  
MINISTER'S VISIT TO NEW YORK SINCE BRITISH PREFER FOR MOMENT TO  
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PAGE 03 STATE 199405

KEEP IT ON BILATERAL BASIS. NEVERTHELESS, THOUGHT THIS REPORT  
WOULD BE OF USEFUL BACKGROUND TO DEPARTMENT AT THIS TIME.  
SULLIVAN

UNQUOTE. RUSH

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NNN

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